



Proficient | Exemplar Essay

Big Data

Controversy Over Privacy



Claim and Focus

An appropriate hook (“As we may know, our government collects a lot of information about us”) leads to a clear claim about the authors’ strategies (“While both articles use...the second article does a better job... with ethos and pathos to allow people to form their opinion on the topic”). Focus on the claim is maintained and developed throughout the essay.



Analysis and Evidence

Analysis of the authors’ rhetoric is thorough in some places (“The second article by Sirota employs pathos and ethos...plugging into the emotions of his readers with personal stories”) but not others (“They do this so the reader can acknowledge on what’s going on”). Consistent presentation of specific evidence and balanced analysis would move this essay to a 4.



Organization

Purposeful organization is employed with clear paragraphs for the introduction, related supporting details, and a reflective conclusion. Transitions are mostly varied (“While both articles use,” “Since,” “Due to”) and show the relationships between ideas, but don’t necessarily enhance them.



Language and Style

The essay maintains an objective tone and mostly formal style. Domain-specific vocabulary is consistently employed when analyzing each author’s strategies (“The article also uses logos, estimating,” “Sirota’s essay uses more ethos”). More advanced word choice throughout (“it did a better job,” “from the large number of facts that are used to back the claim up”) would move this essay to a 4.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait ‘looks like’ in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see “25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays” by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

Big Data



Controversy Over Privacy

As we may know, our government collects a lot of information about us. Things such as tax records, legal records, license records, and records of government services received. Even our license plates can be scanned as we drive, sending our private information to large databases that a variety of people can access. As new technology is brought into this country, people are more concerned with their privacy. However, corporations are finding ways to legally get private information to work to their advantage. Two essays on the topic use different methods to state their opinions about the argument: "Private License Plate Scanners Amassing Vast Databases Open to Highest Bidders" from the news source RT and "Who Has the Right to Track You?" by David Sirota. While both articles use pathos, ethos, and logos to set up the argument and prove their points, the second article does a better job bringing all the necessary information with ethos and pathos to allow people to form their opinion on the topic. The first article merely states the facts and emphasizes logos, which is not always as effective in changing the audience's mind on the issue.

The author of the first article, "Highest Bidders" used logos to back up the claims that were made. The author first states that the collecting of personal data is lawful as long as the private companies don't use it against people. The author continues the paper by stating facts from various companies that back up his claim. "The banks want it," says Liran Cohen in the article. "We are reaching out to our teams to make it better," says another individual named Les Morris. The strength of this claim comes from the large number of facts that are used to back the claim up. The article uses some ethos by being specific on which companies are actually tracking people down and

giving the information to other trusted organizations. One quote from the article says, "Banks strongly encourage its repo contractors to use plate scanners, based on their efficiency in tracking down loan defaulters." This proves the point on why collecting private data is beneficial. The article also uses logos, estimating on how many license plates they get each year and how much money they get off of it. They do this so the reader can acknowledge on what's going on. Lastly, this article ends with saying that policy thinkers and ordinary people who are really against this should rethink their opinion and think about the good outcomes coming from tracking people's data.

The second article by Sirota, employs pathos and ethos, quoting respectable sources like the Wall Street Journal to give him credibility, and plugging into the emotions of his readers with personal stories. The strength of this claim comes from the author appealing to the reader's emotions to back the claim up. Sirota states that private companies collecting personal data is wrong and should be outlawed. The Sirota's essay uses more ethos to prove the argument which is the main objective of the prompt. Most people can be easily persuaded if the argument includes pathos and ethos because then they can relate to the argument. Since the second document can be personal, more people will agree to this idea. The first document by RT has information that does not apply to their personal life so they are less likely to take an interest.

Although both articles were full of information, there was a big difference in the effectiveness of the articles. The first document has pure information (logos) which may not be enough for people to take a stance in the argument because people need to have more personal experiences. "Who Has the Right to Track You?" by David Sirota uses examples, quoted respected individuals, and brought in personal stories. Due to its use of ethos and pathos, it did a better job persuading the reader to consider their opinion on the matter.